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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1347
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 0756
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 0373
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 1545
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY 2513
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY 2449
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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0519
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DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/WE, IO/PSC, NEA/ELA

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TAGS: [KPKO](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [IT](#) [LE](#) [IS](#) [SP](#)

SUBJECT: SPAIN'S VIEWS ON UNIFIL HANDOVER

REF: STATE 105467

Classified By: Acting DCM William Duncan for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) MOD Director General for Defense Policy, General Raggio, shared information about how Spain is preparing for a proposed UNIFIL command handover. Spain is still working towards a transition sometime in February, although they have heard that there have been "rumblings" from the Italian military that a delay might occur. Our Spanish contacts believe that most of the Italian defense leadership is willing and able to continue the UNIFIL mission, but that PM Berlusconi is directing the change for political reasons.

¶2. (C) In terms of next steps, the Spanish are preparing for General Alberto Asarta Cuevas to interview with UN officials via videoteleconference the week of October 19. At this time, Spain has no plans for additional troops beyond the previously announced 200 headquarters staff that would accompany General Asarta Cuevas. We stressed the importance of avoiding any reduction in the overall number of European troops in UNIFIL. Raggio said that Spain anticipated that the UN DPKO would need to focus on force generation if it determined that additional troop levels were required.

CHACON